



Morgantown Municipal Airport

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PRESS RELEASE

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MORGANTOWN AIRPORT EXCEEDS ENPLANEMENT GOAL, RETAINS \$1 MILLION FEDERAL FUNDING

One by one, business and leisure travelers who boarded commercial and charter aircraft at Morgantown Municipal Airport throughout 2013 and flew to destinations around the globe racked up 10,219 enplanements that will fly the airport right into \$1 million in federal funding. That passenger count continues to soar to its height!

Marhefka became interim director in mid-October. She had known the passenger numbers were lagging. Later that month, a full-throttle multi-media advertising effort to promote the airport and its air service was created and launched. A few weeks later, \$38 one-way United Express flights to and from Dulles International Airport in Washington, DC, were featured through January 8 on Silver Airways, Morgantown's commercial air carrier. This was the lowest rate ever for Morgantown-Washington flights!

"I was confident we would exceed our 10,000 enplanement threshold to qualify for the \$1 million entitlement funding because over the years the Greater Morgantown area and surrounding communities have proved to have a rock-solid, loyal passenger base that has supported Morgantown Municipal Airport. I put my faith in the people who have chosen to use this essential element of their community's infrastructure," Interim Airport Director Jackie Marhefka said.

"Proactive leadership was exercised from the time Ms. Marhefka took over and the old director left," Morgantown Assistant City Manager Glen Kelly said. "The enplanement issue was identified as being behind the power curve prior to Jackie taking over, she hit the ground running upon assuming command. Through Jackie's call to a Silver Airways vice president, we were able to meet (with the chief commercial officer and the Network & Schedule Planning Director) and gain the best rate ever from Morgantown to DC. It enabled us to market that great rate and try to reclaim the ridership we've had in the past."

Mr. Kelly attributed the successful venture to teamwork.

"Throughout the process, we worked as a team to develop marketing strategies and market the airport," Kelly said. "It was teamwork between the Airport Director and City Management."

“The \$38 rate was an attractive incentive for people who had never flown before or who had not flown on Silver Airways and wished to try their air service,” Marhefka said. “It also was an affordable opportunity for those who wanted to fly to Washington in the morning, spend the day shopping or visiting museums, have dinner that evening, and then return home.”

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